

## **BAY CITY AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY (BCATS)**

Technical Committee Minutes - April 7, 2009

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### **Call To Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m.

### **Those present were:**

Dave Engelhardt, BCATS staff; Dirk Westbury, BCATS staff; John Gaydos, City of Bay City; Terry Moulthane, City of Bay City; Dale Majerczyk, City of Essexville; Jim Lillo, Bay County Road Commission; Dave Geiger, MDOT-Saginaw; Brandon Wilcox, MDOT Planning; Gary Brandt, Monitor Township Supervisor; Garrett Geer, Dow Chemical; Mike Hayes, Main Street Consulting; and Mike Seward, Bay Area Chamber of Commerce.

### **Minutes from February 10, 2009 Tech meeting:**

It was moved by Majerczyk, seconded by Gaydos, to approve the minutes from the February 10, 2009 meeting. Motion Passed.

*Engelhardt requested that Agenda Item #8 be moved up so that the special guests at the BCATS Technical Committee Meeting could address the subject. As there were no objections, the item was moved up for discussion.*

### **Chamber of Commerce Letter to BCATS:**

Mike Seward of the Bay City Chamber of Commerce addressed the BCATS Technical Committee Meeting to discuss gaining support from the group for five special projects. The Chamber of Commerce is looking for BCATS assistance to guide the Bay County Transportation Needs Task Force in the appropriate next steps to bring these five projects forward in terms of identifying funding with a focus on the use of stimulus dollars for these projects. Mr. Seward would like to see these projects in the MDOT 5-year plan. The projects that BCATS is being asked to consider are the same ones that were endorsed by the Bay County Board of Commissioners. Seward would like to see all five projects moved forward being funded with stimulus dollars or as Congressional Earmarks. Seward felt that the projects being proposed by the Chamber of Commerce for support were vital to transportation needs and to economic development in Bay County. The projects included are: Widening and improving M-84 from Saginaw County Line to Euclid Avenue and Salzburg Road to the Bridge in Bay City; New interchange at Mackinaw Rd. and US-10 and widening and improving Mackinaw Rd. to Delta College; New interchange at Garfield Road and US-10 and widening and improving Garfield Rd. to new MBS Airport Terminal; Resurfacing and widening I-75 from Wilder Rd. to the Arenac County Line, and Making M-138 an All Season Road in Bay and Tuscola Counties.

Geiger discussed and commented on the projects. M-84 from Delta Rd. to Euclid Ave is set to receive stimulus package funding and Salzburg from Euclid to the Bridge is anticipated to be funded in 2013. Traffic counts will be taken at the Mackinaw Rd. interchange and on Mackinaw Rd. to determine how much traffic comes from Delta College and the Tech Park to better determine the existing level of service in the area recognizing that there already appears to be a level of service issue trying to access Mackinaw Rd from the newly built Fabiano Distributors access road. A traffic light is being put in by Fabiano Brothers and counts will be taken to determine if further action is required. A possible option for this interchange would be a dual roundabout, similar to the one at M-81 and I-75 in Saginaw County. Traffic counts will also be taken at the Garfield Road interchange. The widening and resurfacing of I-75 from Wilder Road to Arenac County was originally included in the stimulus project list for resurfacing only, however, this project had to be pulled due to the amount of funds available. If additional funding becomes available, the I-75 Project will be placed back on the stimulus list. Due to low traffic volumes and the funding availability, the conversion of M-138 to an All Season Route is not a priority for MDOT. The Garfield & Mackinaw Rd. sections that are beyond MDOT

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jurisdiction and is not currently a priority on the Road Commission project list.

Gaydos had a concern about chasing down Congressional Earmark funding for the five projects being supported by the Chamber of Commerce since as they might take funding away from other projects that are for rebuilding or maintaining the existing system. It was unclear what sort of assistance the Chamber of Commerce was looking for in regards to these five projects. Engelhardt explained that BCATS supports, but doesn't fund MDOT Projects in the BCATS region. BCATS relies upon the implementing agencies to priorities their projects based on the funding that is available. Engelhardt discussed STP Funding and explained that BCATS is focused on maintaining the existing federal aid roadway system and that the group was not looking for new construction and expansion projects. Engelhardt emphasized that there is a specific process and protocol that must be followed when placing projects into the TIP. Funds must be identified to be placed in the TIP and there is no extra money to fund projects other than the ones that are currently in the TIP.

If there are funds earmarked for the five Chamber of Commerce projects, those earmarks may be in direct competition with other projects in the BCATS area that have been long awaiting funding. Seward said that the Chamber of Commerce didn't want to compete with any other project funding, but rather wanted support for the additional projects. Seward believed that the new projects would need to be placed in the 5-year plan. Majerczyk wanted to know what needed to be done administratively. Garrett Geer of Dow Chemical stated that there is great support for these projects, however to get Lansing support it's important to have local support. Mr. Geer also stated that no one wanted to take away STP Funds from other projects, but rather to gain additional support and funds for the five projects. Lillo mentioned that the Garfield Rd. Project was outside of the BCATS area and would need to include Saginaw Counties support. Seward stated that he felt these projects were of major importance for economic development in Bay County and that he wanted support and recognition that they are for the good of all.

Engelhardt mentioned that even earmarked money historically has only amounted to approximately 70% of the funding for a project. It's important to know where the additional funding would be coming from for these projects. Engelhardt stated that the BCATS Technical Committee did not have the authority to give support for these projects. Engelhardt said that after more discussion and clarification that the BCATS Technical Committee may be able to request favorable support from the BCATS Policy Committee. However, at this time he didn't feel that enough information had been provided or is available to make any decision regarding support for the five projects. Engelhardt suggested pursuing additional information on the five proposed projects from MDOT using the travel demand model and waiting for the traffic count data being pursued by MDOT. Such information may help to prioritize the projects and determine the level of work that would need to be done. In either case, major projects such as the five projects identified here, generally take five to ten years of identifying the problem, analyzing the situation, determining the appropriate fix, prioritizing the need and then pursuing the money to complete the project. This is particularly true in those projects that impact multiple agencies and multiple political jurisdictions. Majerczyk thought that the Chamber of Commerce might want to look at economic development funding or other sources of funding for the five proposed projects. Engelhardt asked if the Bay County Transportation Needs Task Force had contacted the Saginaw Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (SMATS) which is the comparable organization in Saginaw to BCATS. Seward indicated they had not, as BCATS was the beginning of the local outreach for support. Engelhardt said that the BCATS Policy Committee Meetings take place the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every other month and that by the next meeting cycle there could be more information available, such as some output from the travel

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demand model and the traffic counts to better determine levels of support that might be recommended to the BCATS Policy Committee regarding support of the five proposed projects.

### **BCATS 2008-11 TIP Amendment - Bay County Road Commission:**

Engelhardt discussed the amendment needed for the BCRC, Beaver Road Project. The original projects has been changed and has been combined into one rather than two projects.

A motion was made by Lillo, seconded by Majerczyk, to favorably recommend to the BCATS Policy Committee that the Bay County Road Commission Beaver Road Project be amended to include the area from Mackinaw to M-13 in the TIP. Motion passed.

### **BCATS 2008-11 TIP Amendments - MDOT:**

Engelhardt provided everyone with a handout of MDOT projects needed to be amended in the BCATS 2008-11 TIP. Engelhardt discussed the projects to be included in the TIP. The changes needed consist of GPA projects and correction of the limits for the I-75/M-84 project.

A motion was made by Majerczyk, seconded by Geiger, to favorably recommend to the BCATS Policy Committee to correct the project language and the MDOT GPA projects listed on the handout and to have them included in the 2008-11 TIP. Motion passed.

### **BCATS 2010-13 TIP Adjusted Time Line for Adoption:**

Engelhardt discussed the need to adjust the time line for BCATS adoption of the 2010-13 TIP. The original June approval date will be moved to August. Engelhardt discussed the importance of solidifying BCATS Projects to make sure there is enough time to give proper public notice.

### **Stimulus Projects Selection for the TIP:**

Engelhardt discussed stimulus project selection for the TIP and the associated illustrative list for possible additional funding based on the anticipated amount of funds that are expected to come from the stimulus package. Engelhardt provided everyone with a list of projects that can be moved forward including funding for Marquette Ave Connector, Wilder Rd, Borton Ave, and Truman Parkway & Woodside Ave. Bay Metro did not have a specific list of projects for stimulus funding at the technical meeting but is working on which projects to include for stimulus funds. The GI deadline for stimulus funded projects will be sometime in December. Discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Majerczyk, seconded by Gaydos, to favorably recommend to the BCATS Policy Committee to add the Economic Stimulus projects into the 2008-11 TIP. Motion passed.

### **Project Selection for BCATS 2010-13 TIP:**

Engelhardt provided everyone with a handout regarding project selection for BCATS 2010-13 TIP. With the stimulus funding existing now for Borton Ave, there are STP funds available in 2010 that needs to be allocated for projects. With the reduced more recent estimates for 2010 and 2011 STP funds available, there is \$109,837 unprogrammed in 2010 and 2011 is overprogrammed by \$157,907. It was decided to have the available 2010 funds be allocated to the Bay-Arenac Dr project which was on the illustrative list for economic stimulus funds but didn't receive those funds. The 2011 allocation for Midland Rd would be reduced to the current estimate of STP funding available and the remainder of the project cost would be Conversion of Advanced Construct from 2012. Engelhardt discussed the importance of having a better idea of the funding for projects that go into the BCATS 2010-13 TIP in order to better allocate funds. Gaydos commented that he has three projects ready to go for inclusion in the BCATS 2010-13 TIP. Engelhardt requested that final prioritization and approval of projects for the

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2012 and 2013 project list occur at the June BCATS Policy Committee Meeting so there is adequate time for the required public involvement process to approve the TIP at the August Policy Committee meeting.

A motion was made by Lillo, seconded by Gaydos, to favorably recommend to the BCATS Policy Committee to approve the addition of Bay-Arenac Dr to 2010 STP funds and adjust the funding for Midland Rd project to the most recent estimate in the BCATS 2008-11 TIP. Motion passed.

### **Asset Management IRT Reporting Update:**

Engelhardt gave an update on the Asset Management IRT Reporting stating that every agency in the BCATS area submitted their information. The State is currently looking to blending this reporting with the Act 51 reporting to reduce the required reports.

### **Trumbull/Wilder Road Corridor Update:**

Engelhardt provided everyone with an update on the Trumbull/Wilder Road Corridor Project. Within the next couple of months a meeting will be scheduled to discuss this project further. Geiger has information to provide regarding this project. MDOT has reviewed this corridor with the Travel Demand Model (TDM) and will have the results at the upcoming meeting. When the meeting is scheduled to discuss this project, Engelhardt would like to have Seward present to review the results from the TDM analysis of their requested projects.

### **Non-Motorized Update:**

Engelhardt discussed the non-motorized updates. He also discussed the regional unveiling of the findings of Phase II of the Tri-County Regional Path Study that took place on March 11<sup>th</sup> at Delta College. There was a good turnout for the event. However, there was no formal discussion about rail road use of right of ways or pipeline owner needs and assessments.

### **Project Updates:**

The **Beaver Road Project** will have its GI in the next month. The **Midland Road Project** has the survey complete. State Park and Wilder Road will get a replacement traffic Signal, funded with local funds. The **Christa McAuliffe Safe Routes to Schools Project** is waiting to get easements (12 total) from the township. The plans are done, but it's unlikely the project will be completed before school starts back up in the fall. The **Harrison Street Project** received 14 bids, Lee Wood was the lowest bid. The GI for the **Marquette Connector Project** has been completed. This project is expected to let July 10. However, there are SHPO requirements and clearance that will be needed by May 29. The project will start in August.

### **Other/New Business:**

#### ***BCATS Public Involvement Plan:***

There may be a need to change the current BCATS Public Involvement Plan since the Bay City Times is limiting their publication to only three days a week. Engelhardt will look into the rules governing the public involvement plans to determine if changes are required and if so, how we can go about making such changes.

#### ***Long Range Plan Projects:***

Projects identified in the Long Range Plan (LRP) originally were to include all major plans. Engelhardt wondered if there should be more plans included. Rachel Tupica indicated that ideally all projects should be in the LRP. Engelhardt commented that in the past only known projects that had been identified likely to occur in the next 5 to 10

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years, and specifically any expand or improve projects were specifically identified in the LRP. Important corridors are listed and by reference all federal aid eligible roads for maintenance are listed. Discussion ensued.

### ***Movement of Stimulus Projects Into TIP:***

At the February 18, 2009 BCATS Policy Committee Meeting there was a favorable motion made to allow Dave Engelhardt the authorization to amend the BCATS 2008-11 TIP administratively with prioritized list of local road projects for Economic Stimulus Funds once in agreement with implementing agencies. Bay Metro was not included at the time as Economic Stimulus funds for transit agencies was not identified. Additionally TIP changes regarding MDOT projects utilizing stimulus funding was not included in the administrative modification authorization.

A motion was made by Majerczyk, seconded by Lillo, to favorably recommend to the BCATS Policy Committee that Dave Engelhardt be given the authorization to amend the 2008-11 TIP administratively to allow BMTA and the other BCATS agencies including MDOT projects to take quick action to make use of Economic Stimulus that may become available. Motion Passed.

As there was no other business, the April 7, 2009 meeting was adjourned at 12:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Engelhardt  
BCATS Director

*Transcribed by C. Gaul*

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